

BORREGAS AVENUE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES

Summary of Community Input Meeting September 28, 2005

A Community Input meeting was hosted by the City of Sunnyvale on September 28, 2005 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Sunnyvale Community Center, Neighborhood Room, 550 E. Remington Drive, Sunnyvale.

Notices of the meeting were posted in the newspaper and on the City of Sunnyvale home page. Notices were also mailed to residents adjacent to the project and emailed to neighborhood associations, bicycle organizations and other community groups. Approximately thirty members of the community attended the community meeting.

Agenda Items Covered

The community meeting was conducted in accordance with the agenda attached to this meeting summary as Appendix 1. Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies acted as the moderator of the meeting.

Ms. Goodwin reviewed the meeting format, noting that the intent was to gather input from the community and not to reach any final decisions regarding the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridges. Ms. Goodwin stressed it was early in the process and that many questions do not have answers at this point. Ms. Goodwin then introduced Amin Surani, Senior Transportation Planner with the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), who provided a short overview of the project and discussed its project funding. Next, Jack Witthaus, City of Sunnyvale, gave an overview of the project design elements. John Hesler of David Powers & Associates, gave a presentation about the environmental review process, discussing what environmental studies will be done and how environmental concerns will be addressed. Finally, Thom Mayer, the City of Sunnyvale Bike Committee member, gave a brief overview of the community benefits of the bridge projects and how they fit into the full City bike and pedestrian network.

After completion of the presentations, Ms. Goodwin moderated community input concerning the project. The comments and questions of community members are set out below.

The next Community Meeting concerning the Borregas Avenue Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridges project is scheduled for Wednesday November 9, at 7:00 p.m. at Sunnyvale Community Center.

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Public Comments

Comment/Question

Response/Answer

The meeting notification techniques (mass email, newsgroup postings, employer email, postcard, word of mouth, newspaper, city website) were good. But perhaps the postcard notification should go to more people.

Comment noted.

This meeting was in conflict with a local back-to-school night. Need to coordinate with the schools for future meetings.

Comment noted.

How many houses would the bridge be in front of along Alturas?

Approximately eight houses.

Why can't the bridge go the other way i.e. towards Mathilda?

The bridge would be too close to Matilda Avenue at that location to allow such a configuration.

Will a reduction of car trips be considered as an environmental benefit in the environmental document?

If there are usage numbers of the proposed bridges, then impacts can be analyzed yes.

When will the draft environmental document be prepared?

At the end of 2005 or early 2006.

A speaker who is a proponent of trails and has a website (Sunnyvale_trails@yahoo.com) noted that the environmental document should address the East Canal bridge as an alternative. Why isn't the bridge there today servicing flows? For safety reasons, bikes and cars should be separated. Glad to hear about the East Canal plans.

Sunnyvale is planning a trail on East Canal.

The Highway 237 underpass is too low. Floods are a problem. It is not convenient. That other trail isn't ADA compliant. This isn't a substitute.

Comment noted.

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Comment/Question

Response/Answer

There are proposed renovations along Ahwanee to add medium density housing and retail uses. Has this been taken into account?

Future land use will be considered in the environmental document and the Borregas Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge information will be circulated to other Departments in the City of Sunnyvale to make sure the latest information is utilized.

If Nineteen (19) parking spaces are lost this would be a very bad thing. Never allowed to park in front of our houses now. This will be a big impact on our street (Ahwanhee/Alturas). Need some help for those homeowners.

Comment noted.

How many more parking spaces will mini mall need? There is high demand for parking now. Surprised that the bike bridge project did not impact the street. There is a gas station toxic waste problem at Borregas and Ahwanhee. How did this design get picked? There was never any neighborhood input. Why were other designs not considered?

Alternative designs were looked at. The City will explain what those were and the factors that lead to their being discarded will be explained in the environmental document and at the next meeting. The public input is just starting this is the first of several meetings regarding this project.

A representative of the Moffett Park Business and Transportation Association, representing 15,000 employees, applauded the project, noting that the lack of a safe route was the number one concern of her employees. The representative also noted that commercial concerns needed to be addressed also.

Comment noted

How wide will the bridge be?

Ten (10) feet.

This is an important pedestrian bridge. It should be given consideration.

Comment noted.

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Comment/Question

Response/Answer

Why were the other designs thrown away?

ADA and bike requirement, not gas station. The middle of the street alternative showed flaws on connectivity and visual intrusion. Can't build the switch-backs any more.

Is there a reason for both bridges having the same design? It is a money issue, looks or what?

The overall design look was part of the type selection process; the amount of room that is available and the ADA requirements makes them similar. The City wanted them to be tight to the intersection.

The Ahwanee Avenue area will redevelop over the life of this project; the service station will develop, buildings will be taller, etc. The environmental document should cover that.

Comment noted.

A forty-eight year resident suggested Mary Avenue as a better crossing location. The speaker also believes that existing overpasses should be retrofitted rather than building new bridges. Another suggestion was that the bridge go close to Mathilda Avenue, so it would be in front of the garages not homes. The intersection is not safe today.

Comment noted.

A resident living on Alturas noted that morning sun make it difficult to see, especially concerned about bicyclists. The resident also suggested a traffic signal at "ladder crossing."

Comment noted.

A stop sign should be analyzed in the environmental document. Help to mitigate speeding.

The traffic consultant will look at it as part of environmental document.

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Comment/Question

Response/Answer

This location was chosen because it is close to the Mathilda corridor. It is a nice way to get through Mary Avenue and Fair Oaks. It is too far for Mathilda residents.

Mary Avenue was studied years ago; the overcrossing is already very high and would only go in if autos were allowed. The City has in the General Plan a connection for Mary in the Transportation Impact Fee. It is very expensive but it is moving forward and will have bike lanes.

A resident and four-year bike commuter who lives in Orchard Gardens stated that there is no good route; not even for shopping. The resident would like that access. The existing bridge has access issues with the yield to Highway 101 traffic. Caltrain commuters should be considered.

Comment noted.

Another resident was sympathetic to the bike commuter with questions about routes and soundwall height.

Comment noted. Soundwall is sixteen feet (16) in this location.

The route chosen already has problems with car parking, particularly Friday nights and after 3:00 p.m. That is when any traffic/parking studies should be conducted. People park at the school, even overnight. They generate a lot of trash and there is graffiti tagging. Can another route be chosen? Also, stop signs won't work; need a streetlight. Finally, will gangs come in?

Typically, pedestrian overcrossings do not have gang issues; especially since there is no vehicle access.

What will the landscaping look like?

The City has an additional project. City staff working on that part will attend at the next community input meeting.

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Comment/Question

Response/Answer

Where does the funding for this project come from?

There are several sources of funding. There are development traffic mitigation fees that have been paid and are being applied to this. The VTA is putting up some of the money; that comes from Federal sources, CMAQ, the San Francisco Bay Area air district and from voter enacted Measure B funds.

What will the plan be with regard to bike paths or lanes on Borregas Avenue?

The City will expand its network of bike paths and lanes.

A Palo Alto resident noted that Palo Alto has a lot of bike paths and trips. Sunnyvale needs connections and the speaker hopes the City of Sunnyvale will take comments seriously.

Comment noted.

A supporter of the project noted that she stopped biking due to lack of safety improvements.

Comment noted.

With \$3.00 gas this is a good thing.

Comment noted.

A three way stop is necessary.

Comment noted.

A bike rider from San José currently uses Fair Oaks but does not believe it is great for biking or a good route.

Comment noted.

A written comment strongly supports the project and believes it will be a tremendous asset to the City. The comment was written by a person who has been bicycle commuting in Sunnyvale for four years. All his questions and comments were answered by the City and other speakers. "We can't get this in soon enough."

Comment noted.

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Appendix 1:

Community Input Meeting Agenda

Borregas Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridges

Wednesday, September 28, 2005 at 7 p.m.

Agenda

1. Review of Meeting Format, *Eileen Goodwin Moderator*
Purpose: *To understand the format of the evening (2-3 minutes)*
2. Historic Overview of Project, Funding and Project Benefits, *Amin Surani, VTA*
Purpose: *Describe purpose, historic context and review the projects' benefits to the region (10 minutes)*
3. Overview of Bicycle Footbridge Project Design Elements and Project Development, *Jack Witthaus City of Sunnyvale*
Purpose: *To explain the location of the bridge structures and their relationship to the surrounding neighborhood (15 minutes total)*
4. Overview of Environmental Review, *John Hesler David Powers and Associates*
Purpose: *Explain what technical studies will be done and how environmental issues and concerns are addressed (15 minutes)*
5. Community Benefits of the Project, *Thom Mayer Bike Commissioner*
Purpose: *To review the project's benefits to the Sunnyvale community (5 minutes)*
6. Public Input, *Eileen Goodwin Moderator*
Purpose: *To gather input from the community*

Borregas Avenue Bike/Ped Bridges
September 28, 2005 Public Meeting
Comments Received Via email and phone

Received Via/date	Comment
Phone 9/16	Support the bridges. Add to email list. Would like to participate in ADA related issues.
Email 9/15	Does not support the bridges. These bridges will only benefit a very small number of people. They are a gross waste of taxpayer money. The City doesn't care about what the residents want. They are just going to build the bridge anyway.
Phone 9/19	Support the bridge. 101 and Fair Oaks are very dangerous for bicyclists and walkers. This bridge would significantly increase their safety and access.
Email 9/19	Support for the bridge. , I just wanted to say I am a hearty supporter of the overcrossing idea, and the locations look good. My only request is that there is a safe way to enter and exit on Borregas to make the foot, auto, and bike traffic coexist nicely.
Email 9/19	Supports the bridge. It will improve Sunnyvale residents quality of life. Help commuters, and kids going to school as well.
Email 9/20	Support the bridges Just make sure that the designs do not include too many silly restrictors that make it difficult for long recumbent bicycles or trailers to get through.
Email 9/20	I am writing to show my support for this project to help make Borregas a continuous safe bicycle route from Maude to Caribbean.
Email 9/19	Support for the bridges. Resident of the area. Uses the bicycle for transportation. The need for a route where those of us using alternative transport, bicycles, wheelchairs, and our feet, can pass safely in and out of this virtual island without risking our lives. We are committed to the neighborhood; we just spent a good deal of money to renovate and remodel our residence, and plan to spend a number of years here. We would be happy if the city could make the experience safer and more enjoyable by adding these transportation options.
Email 9/20	Support for the bridges. These bridges would allow me to NOT drive my car to work, and improve my cardiovascular fitness.
Email 9/20	Support for the bridges. I'm very much in favor of both the Borregas bridges (bike/ped overpasses)- these links will form a continuous path connecting the residential areas of Sunnyvale to the primary employment centers, providing safe and efficient crossing of enormous barriers which now exist. Sunnyvale needs to step into the 21st century with smart planning and this project is one big leap in that direction.
Email 9/21	Support for the bridges

Email 9/21	Support for the bridges. These bridges are a major improvement in ped & bicycle safety.
Email 9/21	Support for the bridges. A crossing over 101 and 237 will provide bicyclists a practicable route in this area and this will be an enormous improvement for bicyclists traveling to and from the major employment centers in Moffett Park. If the City of Sunnyvale wants to increase bicycle commuting, projects like this are extremely important.
Email 9/21	Support for the bridges. It is very important to make cycling safer whenever and wherever possible.
Email 9/21	Support for the bridges. I think these bike/ped bridges are an excellent idea to connect the various Sunnyvale neighborhoods that are effectively islands to bicyclists and pedestrians. We need to put infrastructure in place that allow people who need to get to and from these neighborhoods to get about their lives without depending on a motor vehicle.
Email 9/21	Support for the bridges. I bicycle commuted to Lockheed for 30 years and had two injury accidents at the Mathilda-101 interchange before I got the message that it is a high risk area. Borregas bridges will provide a major improvement.
Email 9/22	Support for the bridges.
Email 9/23	Support for the bridges. As an avid cyclist, it would make it much safer for me to ride to work (at Juniper Networks) if the Borregas bridges existed. I currently ride on Fair Oaks and the competition for road space with the cars is very dangerous (especially at the 101 and 237 intersections). When these bridges are built, I'll likely ride my bike more often to work. Thanks for considering the construction of these bridges and I look forward to your ratification of the proposal.
Email 9/23	Support for the bridges. The placement of these bridges is excellent for my commute to and from Yahoo!
Email 9/23	Question regarding how the interface between the roadway and the bridge will work and how bicyclists and pedestrians will enter the bridge.
Email 9/24	Support for the bridges. These bridges would greatly improve the safety of my bike ride to the Parkinson's Institute on Morse Ave. Not having seen the structural designs, my only question is whether the ramps need to be as long as they show on the maps.
Email 9/26	Support for the bridges. Link the neighborhoods. Improve commute safety.
Email 9/27	Support for the bridges. This will make it safer for cyclists to cross 101 and will remove a barrier for bicyclists. Please clearly mark the through route so cyclists and pedestrians can find it from major arterials.

Email 9/26	Support for the bridges.
Email 9/27	Support for the bridges. They will create a safe connection to the bay trail.
Email 10/03	Support for the bridges.
Phone 10/06	Support for the bridges. Works at WPCP and would love to bike to work but finds it too dangerous. These bridges would increase the safety.